

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2006

The Honorable Bill Young, Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
H-149, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Young:

We respectfully ask you to add \$400 million for advanced procurement to the VIRGINIA Class nuclear attack submarine program in the Fiscal Year 2007 defense appropriations and authorization bills. The funding would be used to accelerate the dual-production of VIRGINIA Class SSNs. Producing two VIRGINIA SSNs per year before 2012 will increase readiness, reduce unit cost, and help stabilize the submarine industrial base, which is now in crisis.

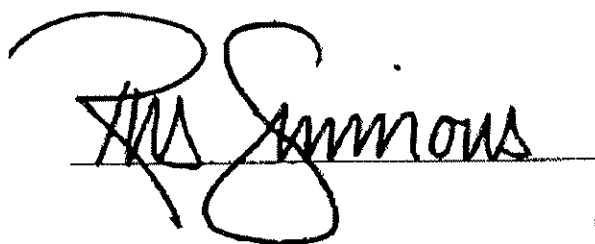
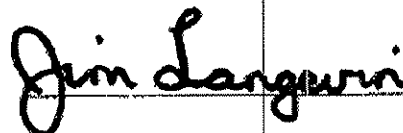
The attack submarine fleet is overstretched today, and the proposed 30-year shipbuilding plan does not produce enough SSNs to meet the Navy's stated requirements. According to the Navy, working at full capacity, the current SSN fleet can fulfill only about 60 percent of the Combatant Commanders' requests. This trend is worsening as a declining SSN force level requires a greater level of risk for our submariners and our Nation.

Industry can achieve significant VIRGINIA Class cost reductions through volume efficiencies if Congress funds two-per-year sooner than 2012. The initial cost estimates for VIRGINIA assumed a build-rate of two-per-year starting in 2002. To date, we have failed to meet this goal, with potentially devastating effects on our industrial base and national security. Accelerating VIRGINIA production will save the Navy approximately \$200 million per submarine.

In addition, accelerating dual-production of VIRGINIA will begin to address an industrial base crisis that threatens U.S. subsurface dominance. Only through increased volume can Congress maintain the submarine industrial capacity of designers, builders and suppliers that is at high risk of coming unraveled.

We look forward to working with you to add \$400 million for VIRGINIA Class advanced procurement to the FY07 defense appropriations and authorization bills. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Simmons", written over a horizontal line.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Langevin", written over a horizontal line.

Rosa L. Delawar

Patricia Brady

JK. Battipati

Markine J. Boudallo

John F. B.

Michael H. Michael

Chaffin Shyne

Henry S. Brown

Patrick T. Kennedy

Neil Greenbaum

Richard J. Schumacher

John R. Brown

Tom Davis

Joanita Melander - The Donald

Robert E. And

Ti Holden

Mike McIntyre

Nancy R. Johnson

John B. Lamm

Virgil Goke

Bob Goodlatte